

This result differs considerably from the analyses of Helvite heretofore published, and does not lead to the formula usually given to Helvite. It is desirable that further investigation should be made when more material is discovered.

Helvite has not previously been found in America.

APRIL 4.

The President, Dr. LEIDY, in the chair.

Twenty-nine persons present.

On Sagitta, etc.—PROF. LEIDY stated, that in a recent trip to Atlantic City, N. J., he for the first time met with the singular worm *Sagitta*. It occurred in large number in the same pond in which he had previously noticed *Balanoglossus*. Whether it was there at the time of his former visit he was unable to say, as the animal is as transparent as the water in which it lives, and may easily escape observation. His attention was accidentally directed to its discovery. Along the edge of the pond there were numerous linear white bodies, flaccid and motionless, which he at first took for fragments of a bleached alga. From the uniformity of their size he stooped to examine them more closely, when he noticed others in the water, more transparent, lying on the sand and occasionally moving suddenly and so actively as to send a little spray above the surface. On transferring some of these bodies to a vial he detected their nature. Subsequently the water was seen to swarm with the little creatures. They are exceedingly sensitive and quickly die after removal. In life they are perfectly transparent and colorless, and move actively at intervals with a sort of spasmodic jerk, bending the tail downwards and darting forward. After death they become flaccid, dull and white, and hence the appearance of the multitude of dead ones on shore.

The *Sagitta* is interesting as being one of those peculiar animals which have puzzled naturalists as to its exact relative position. It is now usually regarded as the representative of an order of worms with the name of *Chaetognatha*.

A species, *Sagitta elegans*, has been described by Prof. Verrill, as occurring at Wood's Holl, Vineyard Sound, and Gay Head, on the New England Coast, and he refers to a second undetermined species occurring in Vineyard Sound.

The *Sagitta* of Atlantic City appears to differ from the former, and also from all other described species found elsewhere, and may be readily distinguished from them by its greater number of mandibular hooks. It may be characterized as follows:

SAGITTA FALCIDENS. Animal transparent, colorless; body compressed, elongated fusiform, with two pairs of lateral hemielliptical fins, separated by intervals from each other and the broad obovate caudal fin, which is truncated posteriorly. Head obovate, about as broad as it is long. Pre-

oral series of spines, 6 or 7 in each, minute; postoral series 18 in each, successively decreasing. Mandibular hooks, from 11 to 14 in each series, usually 12, besides an immature one, scythe-shaped, yellowish brown in color. Length, about three-fourths of an inch; width, $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 mm. Head 1 mm.; caudal fin 1.5 to 1.75 mm. wide. Mandibular hooks 0.75 mm. long.

At the same time, as previously, numerous mounds of the *Balanoglossus aurantiacus* were observed. There were also noticed in the same pond, many projecting tubes of sand, which were found to contain *Clymena torquata*. Further, several specimens of *Glyceria americana* were collected. On the shore of the pond in one place *Donax fossor* appeared to have its residence; and among *Solen ensis*, a single living *Solecurtus gibbus* was found.

APRIL 11.

Mr. S. FISHER CORLIES in the chair.

Twenty-three persons present.

A paper entitled "Description of new species of Terrestrial Mollusca of Cuba," by Rafael Arango, was presented for publication.

APRIL 18.

Dr. W. S. W. RUSCHENBERGER in the chair.

Thirty-four persons present.

Orthite from Amelia C. H., Va.—Prof. GEORGE A. KÖNIG communicated the discovery of orthite among the minerals occurring at the mica mine of Amelia Court House, Va. The speaker has seen only two fragmentary crystals, a large one, nearly four inches long by one inch wide and one-fourth of an inch thick. Both ends were broken. It presents the combination of a flat prism with the brachypinakoid. In the position of epidote the prism will be equal to a series of brachydomes. There is a pronounced cleavage parallel to the macro- and brachypinakoids and to the basal plane. The crystal is enveloped by a thin reddish brown crust of soft altered material, while the interior is pitch black and hard. Fracture uneven. A plate was cut parallel to the basal plane which only became green translucent at a thickness of $\frac{3}{1000}$ of an inch. It was found that a number of opaque small spots were scattered through the leek-green mass on a few spots showing strong polarization, which are probably hydromuscovite.

This section behaves like a uniaxial substance; it is dark with crossed prisms, and light when their position is parallel. The plane of the optical axes is therefore parallel to the basal plane.